

A GRASSROOTS SUMMER MATH CAMP BY TEACHERS FOR TEACHERS

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Would you like to spend a couple summer days with no outside obligations or concerns except working (playing?) at your mathematical problem-solving skills? That is exactly what seven junior high school and high school mathematics teachers from northwest Ohio did at Duane Bollenbacher's Summer Math Camp, held at Bluffton College, Bluffton, Ohio on June 26-28, 1989. The camp ran from Monday morning until Wednesday noon and consisted of 8 hours a day (including evenings) of organized mathematics.

Although the main topic was problem-solving, also included were three guest speakers. Dr. Luther Shetler, retired mathematics professor from Bluffton College, gave a delightful show-and-tell program on "Mathematics in Nature", using shells, flowers, fruits, vegetables, and more, to demonstrate and relate some mathematics that we usually see only in pictures in textbooks. Dr. Stan Clemens, professor of mathematics at Bluffton College, as well as a high school and junior high textbook author, presented a very informative talk about the makings of a mathematics textbook, and especially how the authors must work with each other and with the editors in making all the many decisions in the process. Dr. Joe Kennedy, mathematics professor from Miami University, gave his intriguing slide show on designs and tessellations, his how-to-make-a-geometric-kaleidoscope lecture, and his fascinating lights and strings show. A strong by-product of these enlightening presentations was the fact that the secondary teachers got to see the excitement about mathematics that these more-experienced guests exhibited. Also the camp participants were treated to the I-love-to-share attitude of these guests, the attitude that seems to permeate throughout all of the Ohio mathematics education community. These guest math educators gave time, effort, and themselves just for the sake of learning and sharing.

As mentioned, the main thrust of the math camp was problem-solving. Most of us would love to have the time just to sit and think and work on some of the delightful problems we have encountered at workshops, from colleagues, problem-solving textbooks, Mathematics Teacher calendar section, Games

magazine, etc. During the school year, of course, that seems impossible, and even during the summer we often cannot find the time to enjoy mathematics. At this camp we took the time, and we loved it. We had the opportunity to really delve individually into a problem or to discuss it with others and solve it as a group. We looked at many new problems in different categories and at extensions of old ones.

Why was such a camp conducted? The director's experiences over the years in summer NSF programs at Northwestern, in numerous workshops, in inservice programs, and in conventions led him to want to return to the math education community some of the knowledge, insight, and excitement he had gained.

Much was learned from the camp. The next one, June 25-27, will be even better!



Duane Bollenbacher, Stan Clemens, Luther Shetler, Joe Kennedy — A total of one hundred thirty years in the classroom.

(Editors' note.) Perhaps the above report belongs in the Newsletter, but we think the idea of teachers getting together to solve problems is beautiful. If a nearby college works out a credit arrangement, even better! Finally, it was that photo which just had to be published!
